

Abstract of the Disclosure

The present invention provides a method and apparatus for authenticating the identities of network devices within a telecommunications network. In particular, multiple identifiers associated with a network device are retrieved from and used to identify the network device. Use of multiple identifiers provides fault tolerance and supports full modularity of hardware within a network device. Authenticating the identity of a network device through multiple identifiers allows for the possibility that hardware associated with one or more of the identifiers may be removed from the network device. For example, a network device may still be automatically authenticated even if more than one card within the device are removed as long as at least one card corresponding to an identifier being used for authentication is within the device during authentication. In addition, the present invention allows for dynamic authentication, that is, the NMS is able to update its records, including the identifiers, over time as cards (or other hardware) within network devices are removed and replaced.

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